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January 2021

Pharmacist Enrollment Required for Reimbursement of COVID-19 Vaccine Administration – Issued 12/11/2020

The Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA) is issuing this notice for pharmacies and pharmacists who will provide COVID-19 vaccines to Vermont Medicaid members. The federal PREP Act and/or Vermont law allows licensed pharmacists, and pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist, to administer COVID-19 vaccines. Please refer to the Vermont Board of Pharmacy Emergency Guidance for specific pharmacist authorities.

<https://sos.vermont.gov/media/lz2igjk4/pharmacy-emergency-guidance.pdf>

Effective September 1, 2020, Vermont Medicaid allows pharmacists to enroll in the Medicaid program as licensed providers to provide Medicaid services in accordance with their scope of practice, and state and federal law. This includes ordering and administering COVID-19 diagnostic tests and COVID-19 vaccines during the public health emergency.

Any pharmacist who plans to administer or supervise administration of a COVID-19 vaccine must be enrolled with Vermont Medicaid for the pharmacy to be eligible for reimbursement for such vaccinations. Please enroll as soon as possible to assure that claims will process correctly. Full communication:

<https://dvha.vermont.gov/providers/pharmacy/pharmacy-programs-bulletins-and-advisories>

Additional Information about Pharmacist Enrollment – Issued 12/17/20

This communication provides information that supplements the communication issued on December 11th (above) regarding Pharmacist Enrollment. Full communication:

<https://dvha.vermont.gov/providers/pharmacy/pharmacy-programs-bulletins-and-advisories>

Billing Information for COVID-19 Vaccines – Issued 12/24/20

Effective December 30, 2020, pharmacies may submit claims for reimbursement for COVID-19 vaccines and their administration retroactive to dates of service on or after December 15th, 2020. Pharmacists who administer or supervise administration of COVID-19 vaccines must be Medicaid-enrolled, regardless of who is the ordering provider. Please note that Vermont Medicaid will not reimburse for vaccine administration costs included in other contracts or agreements.

Pharmacists who are the ordering provider must supply their NPI in the prescriber ID field (411-DB). COVID-19 vaccines may require a single dose or a series of two doses to achieve expected efficacy. For a COVID-19 vaccine requiring a series of two doses, the initial dose administration rate will be \$16.94, and the second dose administration rate will be \$28.39. These rates recognize the costs involved in administering the vaccine, including the additional resources involved with required public health reporting, conducting important outreach and patient education, and spending additional time with patients answering any questions they may have about the vaccine.

Pharmacy providers administering COVID-19 vaccinations should instruct members receiving vaccines that require two doses to do the following:

- Use the same pharmacy for both vaccinations
- Receive the second dose on the date specified by the manufacturer's product labeling

Two-Dose Vaccines: The Submission Clarification Code (420-DK) field should be used to differentiate which dose is being administered to allow proper reimbursement. This guidance applies regardless if the same provider or different providers administer the series of doses.

Single-Dose Vaccines: No Submission Clarification Code is required for a single-dose product, Incentive Amount=\$28.39.

Information on COVID-19 Prior Authorization Extensions – Issued 12/29/20

Beginning May 1, 2020, DVHA extended all existing drug prior authorizations (PAs) for an additional six months past their current expiration date to reduce administrative requirements on provider offices and facilitate medication access for Medicaid members. These extensions were applied on a monthly rolling basis through the end of December 2020. This did not affect the requirement for new PA requests.

Effective January 1, 2021 DVHA will no longer extend existing PAs beyond their normal expiration date. Based on an analysis of active PAs, beginning in January this will likely result in 1-2 additional PA requests per week for 95% of all providers. A very small number of providers may exceed the 1-2 requests per week, but data indicates no provider should have more than an additional 4 PA requests per week. This change does not impact new drugs being prescribed that require PA.

Important Changes to Preferred Albuterol Inhalers – Issued 12/15/20

Effective January 1, 2021, the following albuterol inhalers have preferred status on the Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA) Preferred Drug List (PDL): **ProAir® HFA, ProAir RespiClick®, and Ventolin®HFA**. Availability of these agents has been confirmed with both manufacturers and wholesalers. If the patient is unable to use one of these formulations, a Prior Authorization is required.

We continue to monitor the net costs of these medications. The PDL is periodically adjusted based on clinical efficacy and cost-savings as products become available.

Changes to Coverage for Taltz – Issued 12/28/20

Effective January 1, 2021, Taltz® (ixekizumab) will be moving to preferred status on the Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA) Preferred Drug List (PDL), after clinical criteria are met. Taltz® is a humanized interleukin-17A antagonist indicated for the treatment of patients ages 6 years or older with moderate-to-severe plaque psoriasis, adults with active psoriatic arthritis, and adults with active ankylosing spondylitis. Cosentyx® (secukinumab) will be moving to nonpreferred

status due to an increase in net cost to the Vermont Medicaid program. Please consider transitioning your Cosentyx® patient(s) to Taltz®, if clinically appropriate. ALL current prior authorizations for Cosentyx® will remain active through the expiration date specified on the Notice of Decision. If you feel it is not appropriate for your patient(s) to change therapy, please indicate on the PA renewal, and Cosentyx® will be re-authorized.

Preferred Drug List (PDL)

A communication for **January 1, 2021 changes** to the Preferred Drug List have been posted to the DVHA website <https://dvha.vermont.gov/providers/pharmacy/pharmacy-programs-bulletins-and-advisories>. You can also find the Preferred Drug List and Clinical Criteria effective January 1, 2021 on the DVHA website [Preferred Drug List \(PDL\) & Clinical Criteria | Department of Vermont Health Access](#)

Drug Utilization Review Board (DURB)

A DUR Board Meeting was held December 1, 2020 via Teams with an Executive Session held from 6-6:30pm and Public Session from 6:30-8:30pm. Draft minutes from this meeting can be found at <https://dvha.vermont.gov/advisory-boards/drug-utilization-review-board/durb-meeting-minutes>.

Reviewed and discussed by the DUR Board:

Therapeutic Drug Classes: Antihistamines, Minimally Sedating, Alzheimer’s Agents, IBS/SBS/GI Agents, Intranasal Rhinitis, Leukotriene Modifiers, Parathyroid Agents, Sedative Hypnotics (new drug Dayvigo® (Lemborexant) included), Smoking Cessation Agents

RetroDUR/ProDUR: Introduce: Sublocade Adherence, Data presentation: PDL Compliance

Full New Drug Reviews: Arazlo® lotion (tazarotene), Durysta® (bimatoprost implant), Fensolvi® (leuprolide acetate), Isturisa® (osilodrostat), Nexletol® (bempedoic acid), Nexlizet® (bempedoic acid/ezetimibe), Oriahnn® (elagolix/estradiol/norethindrone acetate), Trijardy® XR (Empagliflozin, Linagliptin and Metformin), Xcopri® (cenobamate) Zeposia® (ozanimod)

2021 Drug Utilization Review Board Meeting Schedule

- February 16, 2021
- April 6, 2021
- May 11, 2021
- June 22, 2021
- September 14, 2021
- October 19, 2021
- December 7, 2021

Drug Utilization Review Board Meeting Agendas

<https://dvha.vermont.gov/advisory-boards/drug-utilization-review-board/durb-agendas>

Drug Utilization Review Board Meeting Minutes

<https://dvha.vermont.gov/advisory-boards/drug-utilization-review-board/durb-meeting-minutes>